

Esther L. Bush

As the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Pittsburgh, Esther L. Bush has established herself as a voice of reason, a coalition builder, and a force for positive change in the Greater Pittsburgh community and throughout the United States.

A graduate of Pittsburgh's Westinghouse High School, Ms. Bush began her career as a high school teacher. She also worked as a college administrator and corporate consultant. She has moved progressively up the ladder of the Urban League movement, starting in 1980 with the position of Assistant Director of the Labor Education Advancement Program for the National Urban League in New York City. From there, she served first as Director of the New York Urban League Staten Island Branch, then as Director of its Manhattan Branch. Before returning to her hometown of Pittsburgh in December 1994, Ms. Bush was a positive and dynamic force as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Greater Hartford. She is the first female to serve in each of her last four positions in the Urban League movement.

Ms. Bush is nationally recognized as a strong and very vocal advocate for economic and social equality initiatives that benefit African Americans and thereby the whole community. This advocacy impacts the traditional education, employment and housing programs of the League, as well as more contemporary programs such as the charter school, family support centers, home ownership, early childhood services and youth development. An African American Leadership Development initiative is the League's latest effort in progressive programming. During Ms. Bush's tenure the League has achieved financial stability and enhanced its credibility. Further, it has reached out to the community by publishing three books, two directories and sponsoring three trips to Africa and one to Brazil. Her community service goes far beyond what professional obligations would require. She is a frequently sought after motivational speaker. She also was a popular panelist on the weekly-televised "Eddie's Digest" talk show. Ms. Bush hosts the bi-monthly "Urban Reality" live, call in radio program.

Ms. Bush was appointed by Governors to serve on the: PA Commission for Crime and Delinquency, Law Enforcement and Community Relations Task Force, the Governor's Commission on Academic Standards, and the Voting Modernization Task Force. She served on several committees to establish the new Home Rule Charter form of government for Allegheny County. She served on the Executive Committee of the National Urban League Association of Executives ('94-02) and is Chairman of the Urban League of Pittsburgh Charter School Board of Trustees. She is President of the International Women's Forum, Western Pennsylvania Chapter and on the International Women's Forum Board of Directors. In addition, Ms. Bush is on the boards of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Systems, the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and many other boards and committees.

She is also an adjunct faculty member in the School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh. In addition, Ms. Bush is a member of several advisory committees at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University.

Ms. Bush received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Hartford in 1997. She also holds a bachelor degree from Morgan State University and a graduate degree from The Johns Hopkins University.

Ms. Bush is a highly motivated and driven individual who believes that one person can make a difference in our society.

(Founded in 1918, the mission of the Urban League of Pittsburgh is to enable African Americans to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights. In fiscal year 2003, 36,000 individuals and families were served through its 26 program contracts and tens of thousands more through its advocacy, radio and television efforts. The services are administered from four primary locations and several site based locations. The League's annual budget is 6 million dollars and the Charter School budget is 1.9 million.)